

WE CLAIM AS OUR INVENTION:

1. A method for generating a print image on an image carrier composed of a first partial image and a second partial image disposed transversely offset relative to a first direction, comprising the steps of:

- (a) generating a relative motion between an ink droplet-ejecting printhead and said image carrier along said first direction for generating said first partial image on said image carrier;
- (b) generating a transverse offset between said printhead and said image carrier in a second direction proceeding transversely to said first direction;
- (c) generating a relative motion between said printhead and said image carrier along said first direction for generating said second partial image on said image carrier; and
- (d) varying a waiting time interval between an end of printing in step (a) and a beginning of printing in step (c), according to a prescribed function.

2. A method as claimed in claim 1 comprising employing a random function as said prescribed function.

3. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein said printhead is a first printhead and wherein said image carrier is a first image carrier, and wherein step (d) comprises varying said waiting time interval so that a relative motion according to steps (a), (b) and (c) between a second printhead and a second image carrier, without taking the variation of said waiting time interval into account, has a likelihood that a longitudinal offset along said first direction will arise between said first partial image and said second partial image on said second image carrier which is of a detectable size.

4. A method as claimed in claim 3 wherein said detectable size is an optically detectable size.

5. A method as claimed in claim 4 wherein said optically detectable size is detectable with the naked eye.

6. A method as claimed in claim 1 wherein said prescribed function varies said waiting time interval in multiples of a variation interval.

7. A method as claimed in claim 6 wherein said prescribed function varies said waiting time interval in said multiples of said variation interval from print image-to-print image.

8. A method as claimed in claim 6 wherein said prescribed function varies said waiting time interval in multiples of a variation interval equal to a quotient of a prescribed longitudinal offset and an average speed of the relative motion between the printhead and the image carrier in step (c).

9. An apparatus for generating a print image on an image carrier composed of a first partial image and a second partial image disposed transversely offset relative to a first direction, comprising:

an ink drop-ejecting printhead;

a printhead positioner connected to said printhead for generating a relative motion between an ink drop-ejecting printhead and said image carrier in a first step along said first direction for generating said first partial image on said image carrier, generating a transverse offset between said printhead and said image carrier in a second step in a second direction proceeding transversely to said first direction, and generating a relative motion between said printhead and said image carrier in a third step

along said first direction for generating said second partial image on said image carrier, said transverse offset in said second step producing an overlap region between said first partial image and said second partial image on said image carrier, said printhead in each of said first and third steps, ejecting a plurality of ink drops, including first ink drops, from said printhead onto said image carrier in said overlap region; and

a time control unit connected to said print head which varies a waiting time interval between an end of printing in said first step and a beginning of printing in said third step, according to a prescribed function.

10. An apparatus method as claimed in claim 9 wherein said time control unit employs a random function as said prescribed function.

11. An apparatus as claimed in claim 9 wherein said printhead is a first printhead and wherein said image carrier is a first image carrier, and wherein said time control unit varies said waiting time interval so that a relative motion according to said first, second and third steps between a second printhead and a second image carrier, without taking the variation of said waiting time interval into account, has a likelihood that a longitudinal offset along said first direction will arise between said first partial image and said second partial image on said second image carrier which is of a detectable size.

12. An apparatus as claimed in claim 11 wherein said detectable size is an optically detectable size.

13. An apparatus as claimed in claim 12 wherein said optically detectable size is detectable with the naked eye.

14. An apparatus as claimed in claim 9 wherein said control unit employs a prescribed function that varies said waiting time interval in multiples of a variation interval.

15. An apparatus as claimed in claim 14 wherein said control unit employs a prescribed function that varies said waiting time interval in said multiples of said variation interval from print image-to-print image.

16. An apparatus as claimed in claim 14 wherein said control unit employs a prescribed function that varies said waiting time interval in multiples of a variation interval equal to a quotient of a prescribed longitudinal offset and an average speed of the relative motion between the printhead and the image carrier in said third step.